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TO : **THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.**  
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**175**  
DESP. NO. **DST-20293**  
DATE **October 25, 1955**

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	<b>EUR. 5</b>	<b>ARMY 2 011.7 4/0 P. 1 P. 1 L-2 NEA-4</b>
	<b>11-3</b>	<b>ARMY 3 4/11.2 AIR 2 6/0 7-06B-1</b>

SUBJECT: **PERIPHERAL: Efforts of the Bulgarian Consulate to Persuade Refugee D. T. Vatsov to return home.**  
**DIMITAR TODOROV VATSOV**

There have been reports recently of renewed efforts of the Bulgarian Consulate in Istanbul to persuade certain Bulgarian refugees here to return home. While there is no evidence that this campaign is being conducted on a large scale as yet, these activities on the part of the Bulgarian Consulate were suspended last summer after the arrest of two refugee-agents (ConGen despatch No. 482, June 6, 1955) as well as that of the three re-defectors (ConGen despatch No. 509, June 24, 1955) and of the Bulgarian Vice Consul C. V. Tcholakov (ConGen despatch No. 11, July 8, 1955).

A leading Bulgarian refugee here, Dimitr Todorov Vatsov (ConGen despatch No. 300, February 5, 1952), employed by the local news bureau of Radio Free Europe for the past three years, has disclosed to this office recent attempts of the Bulgarian Consulate to convince him of the advantages of returning to Bulgaria.

D. T. Vatsov states that on the morning of September 25th, while on his way to the office (RFE), he was stopped by an unknown man who introduced himself as a member of the local Bulgarian colony and told Vatsov that he would like to talk to him about resettlement. After a while, however, the stranger admitted that he was a member of the staff of the Bulgarian Consulate, who was instructed by a "high official" to contact D. T. Vatsov and convince him to return to Bulgaria.

During the ensuing conversation, which lasted about fifteen minutes, the Consular official tried to assure Vatsov that everything now has been changed in Bulgaria, that all the mistakes previously committed (by Communists) have been corrected and that all formerly imprisoned leaders of the Agrarian Party (D. T. Vatsov is a member of the Bulgarian Agrarian Party, and, prior to the Communist coup d'etat, was a deputy to the Bulgarian National Assembly) enjoy complete liberty, cooperate with the government and even occupy responsible positions. He admitted that in the past D. T. Vatsov had been unjustly persecuted by the authorities and added that for this reason Vatsov is esteemed by the government which now invites him back. He said that former members of the Agrarian Party are now respected and enjoy complete freedom in Bulgaria and that this happy situation will continue.

He also stated that the Bulgarian government is endeavoring to establish close and friendly relations with the Western Powers, as well as with neighboring countries, and added a warning that when this is achieved, the situation of the Bulgarian refugees abroad, and especially of those in Turkey, will be very bad.

**ABorisovitch/mot**  
REPORTER

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From Istanbul

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To Vatsov's reply that he would return to his fatherland only when the Communist dictatorship there is overthrown and all Communist agents in Bulgaria go back to Moscow, the stranger, who finally introduced himself as "Dimitrov", advised Vatsov not to miss this opportunity (to return home), since the new war about which certain refugees are dreaming, will not materialize and those who don't return home now will be compelled to finish their days as exiles.

In conclusion, Dimitrov advised Vatsov to think seriously about his proposition and promised to get in touch with him soon again.

A few days later, Vatsov received an anonymous letter stating that it would be to Vatsov's advantage to continue the conversation and inviting him to meet Dimitrov near one of the Istanbul mosques at 6:30 P.M. on October 17th or 27th.

On instructions of the Turkish State Security Police, which was immediately informed of the above, Vatsov met the Bulgarian Consular official at the appointed hour and place on October 17th.

During this second meeting, which also lasted about 15-20 minutes, Dimitrov tried again to persuade Vatsov to return to Bulgaria. To Vatsov's remark that since the amnesty law expires on October 25th, 1955, it would be too late for him to take advantage of it and apply for repatriation, Dimitrov declared that this could be easily arranged provided that the application is given to him personally. In order to convince Vatsov, he even offered to obtain a written assurance, even from V. Chervenkov himself, guaranteeing Vatsov, upon his return, complete freedom and the restoration of his property, confiscated by the government.

Toward the end of the meeting, Dimitrov stated that between November 8-10 he was going back to Bulgaria on official business and, evidently in an attempt to win Vatsov's confidence, made an offer to deliver a letter or a package which Vatsov might wish to send to his relatives in Bulgaria. Before they parted, Dimitrov expressed a desire to meet again on November 5th, and advised Vatsov once more to make an application for repatriation.

While describing his meetings and conversations with the official of the Bulgarian Consulate, D. T. Vatsov was visibly upset. He repeatedly stated to the reporting officer that he would never apply for repatriation nor return to Communist Bulgaria voluntarily. He stressed that he was under pressure from the Turkish State Security to continue his meetings with Dimitrov, stating that the Police had hinted that they might ask him to suggest to Dimitrov that he himself defect. Consequently Vatsov expressed fear that when his double dealings are uncovered by the Bulgarian Consulate, his family and relatives in Bulgaria may suffer.

  
Arthur L. Richards  
American Consul General

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